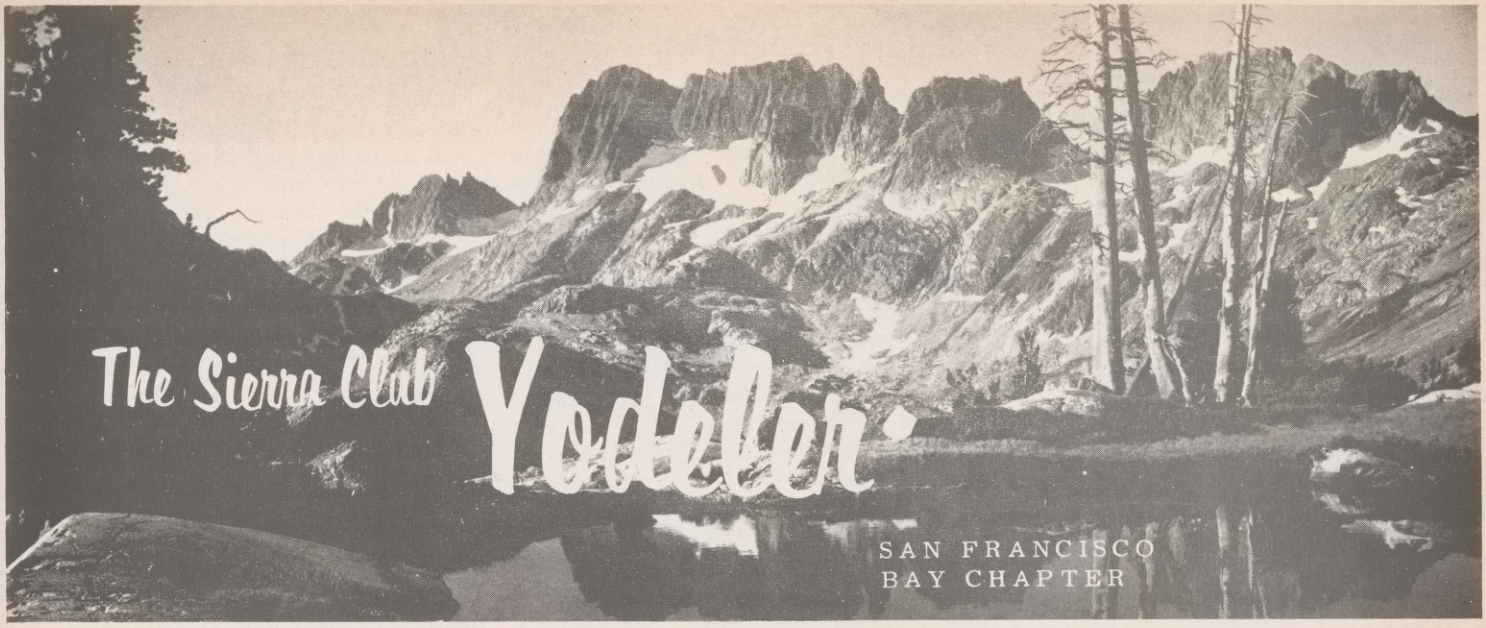

Volume XXI December 7, 1959 Number 18

a Controversy ~ hooray!

Let's have an answer from Dan Thrapp. Leslie Gould, former chairman of the Toiyabe Chapter, is a member of the State Park Commission for Nevada.

(The Conservation column in Yodeler of November 2 was "lifted" bodily from the Southern Sierran, the Angeles Chapter monthly publication.)

N.B. The Wild Life Section of the new Policy Guide does not specifically mention wild burros, but does say that native species should be favored over introduced wild species.

Dear Sir:

I have been reading the "Yodeler" for many years with usual approval.

Today I write to say that I think the comments in paragraph four of the column "Congress and Conservation" on the first page of the November 2 issue more nearly deserves the ejaculation "Nonsense!" than anything else. The writer of this column may not know that the Sierra Club has long refused to take any stand on the issue of the protection of wild horses and burros because these are exotic intruders that effectively reduce the population of more unique and aesthetically desirable native animals. In Death Valley National Monument, for example, the depredations by burros that have gone wild is apparently an important cause of the declne of the all-too-rare desert bighorn sheep. Here in Nevada the quaint little mustangs make vast areas uninhabitable for deer and other animals by so badly fouling the springs that they are unusable. To anyone who does desert camping and depends on finding good water at his destination this is an aggravating matter. The law, in the form I last heard it, in the opinion of

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Happy Years, Virginia!

Mr. William E. Colby—notably a man of his word—announced that in spite of his promise not to speak to the Sierra Club again until he was 90, here he was, only 85 and about to make a speech.....

But this was an OCCASION, a dinner held at Alouette restaurant on December 5 in honor of Virginia Ferguson, Assistant Secretary of the Sierra Club who retires at the end of the year and will move to Santa Barbara to be near her family. Virginia was legal secretary to Mr. Colby and his associates in 1928 when she applied and was appointed to the post with the Club (thereby causing Mr. Colby to incur the wrath of his partners). She brought to the club a meticulous care for office records and the variety of detail which floods into our office, plus a flair for remembering the members and their personal interests which has been of immense value to the club.

How sixty people managed to keep the secret of the dinner plan is not known, but they did, and Virginia's surprise and pleasure was good to see when she came to San Francisco to keep a quiet dinner date with the Colbys and found a room full of her longtime friends and associates. There were speeches, by Mr. Colby and by president Nate Clark and five ex-presidents of the Club, by others associated with her, on the general theme "I remember when....". There was a presentation. A toy T.V. set showed that we hope the real one waiting in the wings will give many hours of pleasure. To all of these the guest of honor happily and with her customary calmness in meeting emergencies.

Most of the sixty old-timers present at the dinner were familiar with the Clubrooms in the days when the membership

(Continued Page 2)

We Do Our Best ~ but not nearly enough

A Board meeting: a Council meeting: Yodeler deadline all telescoped into three days is too much for this reporter. Our notes, written hastily at the meeting will be brief, incomplete, but we hope they will be understandable.

The Directors elected Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas (already a member of the club) an honorary Life Member.

There was much interest in an International Conference on National Parks to be held in Seattle in 1961 in conjunction with an international Fair to be held there that year. Fred Packard and Harold Coolidge are working on this. Coolidge has traveled widely to visit and encourage interest in National Parks in other countries. The Board passed a resolution of support.

The idea of National Park status for the Central Cascades (see S.C. annual 1959) was discussed, with maps and photographs by David Simons. The North West Chapter will soon be making a study, and the National Park Service is being urged to make a survey with a Park in mind. Some directors wordered if this was the right time to press this now that the N.P.S. has seashore areas much in mind and we are also urging the northern Cascades as a National Park.

Senator Murray's bill (S.P. 2549) on Natural Resources was supported, provided on one attempts to turn it into a substitute for the Wilderness Bill. Hearings are now under way, and the sponsors of the bill are among our best friends in Congress.

In California the Department of Beaches and Parks is working to reforest the hills back of the Bull Creek Redwoods, finest stand of the Redwood groves, which was so badly damaged in 1957 by flash floods from

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Sierra Club Yodeler

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NEXT DEADLINE: Jan. 4

VOLUME XXINO. 18 Dec. 7, 1959

Happy Years (Cont.)

was numbered in the hundreds: when Virginia handled all the office business; letters, dues, bookkeeping, telephone calls and the constant stream of visitors. The hundreds grew to thousands, the thousands doubled, the office staff grew to six and more, but the focal point was still the desk by the window with the neat memorandum pad and the useful scrap paper for notes carefully saved under the blotter.

Yes! Things will be different down at the office now, and enquiring members will no longer find their problems solved by the magic words...."Ask Virginia".

Indian Acorn Patties

The N.S.S. lecture on Indian foods made me determined to do what I have had in mind for a long time - that is to try out some of their much-talked-about acorn patties.

In their natural state, I found the patties edible but uninteresting, but with a little salt, they were quite pleasant. I liked them best very thin and crisp (probably most untechnical). While I was about it, I tried the mush (you can also make soup, if you want to go that far). Again it was edible but uninteresting, but cooked with salt, and topped with cream and sugar, it was again quite pleasant - and they say, very nutritious.

Yosemite Nature Notes has some directions in their pamphlet on Yosemite Indians (25¢). You should place the ground acorns in a scooped-out bowl of sand, and pour on gradually warmer water seven times. I used filter paper, and found that 7 pourings were necessary as directed. Some Indians use lye, but I couldn't find any directions as to quantity. You're supposed to cook them on a hot rock, making muffin-sized patties about a quarter of an inch thick. A lightly greased frying pan is a handy substitute. Since I didn't have a lot of acorn meal, I made mine the size of a quarter and had a lot of fun with them. Try them on your friends if you can still find some acorns.

—Elsa Bailey

Controversy (Cont.)

Nevada Fish and Game Commission wildlife experts would have seriously hampered efforts to humanely detect, remove, round-up, or exterminate animals that have increased to the point of becoming a menace to a balanced ecology.

In my opinion this unfortunate legislation could only have come from a very tired Congress, worn out with a deluge of sentimentality and bathos.

There may be some reasons why coyotes and wolves should not be hunted by airplanes. I don't know what they are. Possibly they wouldn't be silly. And I think it may not be wise to refer to "sportsman" as "those bums!" I can't be sure from the wording of the paragraph if all elk hunters and other "sportsmen" are referred to as "those bums", or only those who indulge in the "flagrant" use of airplane spotters. Is the un-flagrant user not a bum? And does this column seriously propose that the Federal Government regulate this matter which may or may not prove unfortunate in some states? Are not state Fish and Game Departments well enough qualified on the advisability of such a regulation?

It seems to me that the measures I refer to go far afield of the historic concerns of the Sierra Club.

Leslie H. Gould, M.D.

Volunteers Wanted

On Wednesday, December 16, at the Club offices, 1050 Mills Bldg., a volunteer crew will be on hand to mail out the brand new Bay Chapter Outing Schedules. Any assistance on this pleasant task will be greatly appreciated by Hasse Bunnelle and her crew.

First Aid

There will be a Standard First Aid class at the Red Cross Building, 1625 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, starting January 19, meeting Tuesday and Thursdays, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. This is important for Leaders as well as others. Contact the Red Cross direct by card or phone PR 6-1500.

We do our best (Cont.)

the cut-over lands up the creek. Save the Redwoods League is interested and helping in this. The idea is to acquire the whole small watershed to forestall more damage. State Park Commission and the Department were also commended for their excellent scheme for creating a Golden Gate Monument or Park.

The Salmon Trinity Alps Primitive Area, under study for creation of a Wilderness area, is inlaid with a mosaic of private holdings and is shaped like an hourglass with a thin corridor joining the two sections. The Forest service is trying to make exchanges which will eliminate the private property. It also wants to exclude the corridor, making two sections. This would certainly invite roadbuilding over the corridor ridge leaving a road scar in full view of the best part of the wilderness. Trinity County refuses to lose any taxable stumpage and insists on equal areas, rather than equal value, on the land exchanges.

Growth of the Sierra Club brings changes. A major expansion of the publications activity of the Club has been planned and was discussed by the Directors. The educational aspects of the Club's activities will thus be greatly strengthened.

Taxes are always with us. The brilliant exposition of the present relationship of the Sierra Club to the Internal Revenue Department, given by Director Richard Leonard, will long be remembered by those who heard it at this meeting. The Club is extremely fortunate in having such experienced minds to work on such problems as were gathered around the table at this Board Meeting. The utmost care is needed to explain this important matter for the guidance of our members. We shall leave this until a later issue when every phrase can be checked by those who know our position. Council meeting news must also wait until the next issue (January 3) for discussion.

C.M.C.

still time to Meet Santa

The East Bay Dinner Committee will be happy to introduce you to Santa at the Christmas Party on Wednesday, Dec. 16, at Willard school, Berkeley.

Dinner, as usual, is at 6:30 p.m. Carols first and afterwards, fun, conversation, and a Christmas tree with a well-timed visit from Poppa Christmas will liven the evening. Children most welcome, with a specially priced plate for the small ones.

Everyone brings an ornament for the tree, wears a Christmas buttonhole, and adds a 50¢ gift (with their name inside the packet) to the pile under the tree.

The cost, as usual, $1.75. Reservations must be in by 10 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 14. So act fast when you read this item. Call Edna Laumann, TH 5-8557.

Work Party

Since the Snow Gods haven't provided snow yet there is still the opportunity for hard work and good food at CTL on the weekends of Dec. 12 and 19. Please check with Anita Suran if you plan on going.

Advertisements

1 pair Italian Ski Boots (black)
Excellent Condition
Men's or Women's - size 8
$19.95
Call Grace Wilhelmi at WA 1-2365 after 6 in the evening.

FURNISHED ROOM, for working girl, use of kitchen, private residence, $40 month, inc. utilities, Sierra Club member preferred. Call Mrs. Margaret Hoebich, 555 6th Ave., S.F. Phone BA 1-7559 evenings.

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Plan includes some major peaks, also outstanding back-country travel experience.
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Oat Hill Mines

(Photo by Doug Peterson)

Napa County went all out for the hikers who accompanied Vern Van Vlear on his Oat Hill Mines trip, Nov. 22. Everything from soup to nuts, — i.e., the finest display of autumn colors yet this year on a gorgeous "spring" day — was on the agenda. Of course, in some quarters there was a little confusion over the enigmatic weather. Alert botanists spotted monkey flowers and wild lilacs in bloom on the one hand, right after having admired mistletoe and red Christmas berries on the other.

The camera fans were happy. They were busy all day shooting pink dogwoods and red and yellow oaks and making studies of the picturesque mine ruins. Other points of interest included the group of coast redwoods, near the end of the hike, which have grown up several miles east of their customary range, and the deep ruts in the old county road where it crosses bedrock, worn by the heavy wagons which used to haul freight between Calistoga and the mines.

Interest in the mining area was sparked by the discovery of globules of native quicksilver in one outcrop, but amateur geologists were in general baffled by the queer "crud" in the excavations and road cuts. Quicksilver minerals are thought to be derived from deep, volcanic sources and carried to favorable places of deposition by vapors or hot water solutions. The emanations migrate upward along zones of fractured and faulted rock and are deposited near the surface under conditions of relatively low temperature and pressure. (This process may be seen in action at

Continued

National Speleological Society (Cave-ology to you, my dear)

"I read in the Nov. 2 Yodeler of the recent establishment of a Mountain Rescue Network by the Sierra Club and the Peace Officers' Assoc. of California.

Perhaps....the Sierra Club would be interested in our own effort to help provide the specialized rescue skills needed in the event of an accident in a California cave.

There are four chapters of the National Speleological Society in California: The Southern California Grotto (near Los Angeles); the Sierra Mojave Grotto; the San Joaquin Valley Grotto; and the San Francisco Bay Chapter. These are active in enjoying the caves of this state and try to work for their protection.

The Sierra Mojave Grotto has been deputized by the Sheriffs of Kern and Tulare Counties as a Cliff and Cave section of the Counties' Search and Rescue Posses. So far they have had only practice sessions, but they would be ready if a cave accident were to occur.

We have also been in touch with personnel of the National Park Service in regard to a possible arrangement for a Park Cave Rescue Team which would assist Park teams in undertaking cave rescue.

The Rescue Team plans have been tied in with a program of the Safety Committee of the NSS which encourages the gaining of cave technical skills and experience. I enclose a copy of this program. Some aspects of it (the program) are quite strongly indebted to the Sierra Club and in particular to the Rock Climbing Section."

Rane L. Curl, Chairman
National Safety Comm.

We WONDER IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE A TRIP WITH THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR WORK. ANYONE IN THE AREA OF THE BAY INTERESTED IN SUCH A GET TOGETHER. A TOUR OF A CAVE?... Editor

(Continued from Col. 2)

Sulphur Banks, in Lake Co.) Cinnabar is the most important ore of mercury, but native quicksilver is common in most cinnabar mines.

The metal is readily extracted from its ores by heating the rock in retorts and condensing the mercury vapor. The standard container for mercury is a metal flask which holds 76 pounds. The November, 1959, issue of the Mineral Information Service, published by the State Division of Mines, quotes $231 as the average price per flask for the first half of 1959.

—Charlotte Stephens

Gala 25th Anniversary

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The 25th anniversary of Clair Tapaan odge proved to be a gala affair. The odge was filled to its "during con-ruction" capacity with a few sleep-g bags in the construction area. The eather was fine with a possible hint snow, and Diane outdid herself on e fine food—menus, candlelight, and l.

There was a good table-full of "honored uests" who had been on work parties uring the first ten years. The high-ght of the week-end came on Saturday ght with reminiscenses and photographs those early years. Bester Robinson oke first and showed some movies the early Lodge construction, includ-g some of himself working on the raft-s in highly questionable positions. He ld us how the group got started skiing the Sierras ("crazy fools" they were en), and how they found Donner Summit be their favorite skiing area. They cided that a ski lodge was in order nd finally persuaded the Sierra Club see it that way also.

Lewis Clark then took over, and even roduced articles on early expeditions. e brought up a wealth of material that as interesting and entertaining to all, and particularly rich in detail to the "old-timers". He showed us slides of the work parties; and finally the day came when the Lodge was finished! Of course, in a few years they found that a major addition was necessary, and the work of reconstruction was started.

This work of reconstruction was further emphasized by the mammoth work party in evidence over the week-end. Architect and work-director, George Homsey, rushed along the finishing of the major construction areas and was awarded a purple heart (or ski?) for his most recent bodily sacrifices to the cause. Bill Horsefall and Jim Clifford worked like mad during the day and were "honored guests" only in the evening. Hardwood floors went down a mile a minute, interior walls spread around the new library, and the new women's dorm suddenly blossomed out in a modern decor. Stairs were finished, showers were waterproofed (?), electrical wiring improved, and so forth through the Lodge. Holiday skiers should come prepared to be pleasantly startled by the "new look".

—Elsa Bailey

Marty and Ned Robinson will be sending out another combination Christmas Card again. This year the new addition to the Robinson line is Glen Edward Robinson. Pretty nice combination! — and may he never cost his father an unwelcome dollar or his mother a tear.

Ski Trails
to the top of mount lincoln ... on the way to benson hut
Ski Touring
is a delightful experience. If you have missed it so far, better give it a try and see for yourself. Check your skiing ability against requirements for the Club's approaching ski touring program. There are many tours available, some involving minimal effort... if you need equipment or advice, come by and see; we'd be GLAD to help you.
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